Hoshikuzuu SCANS

Focus

05

NISHI NORIKO

SCANNER
Hoshi

TRANSLATOR
Hoshi

CLEANER
Hoshi

TYPESETTER
Alpaca Engineer

PROOFREADER
fluffy shee monster

QUALITY CHECKER
Hoshi

FOCUS

フォーカス 2

西のり子

by Noriko Nishi

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フォーカス2

西のり子

FOCUS 2
by Noriko Nishi

#5
Thank you for the sakura photos you took in Meguro
Dear Hirami-san,
I'm sure you're hard at work by the time you get this letter.
They've also bloomed where I am
By the way,

I visited Osaka the other day.
To pick my father up.

I'M BACK,
JUN.
...
-NGH
I didn't say anything
Not even a simple "Welcome back, Dad"

I was just so desperate....
...to confirm for myself that this man was really, truly in front of me. Here. In the flesh
I hadn't cried that much
since my mom died.
LET'S SEE HERE...
grip
HIRAMI-SAN

ASAHINA-SAN!
HEY, SORRY,
DID YOU WAIT LONG?
No.
I JUST GOT HERE.

IT'S BEEN A MONTH SINCE I LAST SAW YOU.
RIGHT?
BUT YOU SENT ME TEXTS EVERY DAY.
I EVEN KNOW WHAT YOU HAD FOR DINNER LAST NIGHT

HAHA.
YEAH...
YOU SAID YOU HAD A SHOOT IN TOKYO TO-MORROW?
YEP.
BUT I'M FREE TODAY!
JR
AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR SHOP?
OH YEAH. MY DAD'S...
...TAKING CARE OF IT.
HUH?
JR 稲荷駅
いなり Inari

I'D ALWAYS THOUGHT
THAT IF MY DAD WERE TO COME BACK,
HE WOULD BLAME ME FOR EVERYTHING THAT HAD HAPPENED
THAT HE HAD ALWAYS BORE A GRUDGE AGAINST ME
BUT I REALIZED..
...HOW WRONG I WAS

MY MIND WENT BLANK.
...
LIVING ALL ALONE IN A PLACE LIKE THAT...
I'M SURE IT JUST GOT TO HIM. EVERY-THING DID.
...
I FEEL LIKE ..
MY FATHER WENT THERE
BECAUSE HE WANTED TO CAPTURE IT. THE THING THAT HAUNTED HIM FOR SO LONG
SHOT
?
...

HIRAMI-SAN?
SORRY. I JUST GOT TO THINK-ING ABOUT
...HOW HAPPY I AM THAT I GOT TO SEE YOU TODAY.
IT WAS PROBABLY TOMURA'S BRIGHT IDEA...
TO CUT OFF ALL COMMUNICATION.
LIKE A "WHAT IF" CASE.
WHEN HE LEFT JAPAN,
HE ASKED YOSHITOMI-SAN TO LOOK AFTER ME

...
SO?
HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT IT?
I DON'T KNOW
HARD TO TELL SINCE IT WASN'T EXACTLY A "SHORT" TIME
EIGHT YEARS
8 LONG YEARS
...
YOU KNOW,
What is that old man doing?
BUT THEN,
I FELT A BIT BETTER AFTER THAT
!?
For real?!
YOSHITOMI-SAN CALLED MY DAD A FUCKING ASSHOLE
AND GAVE HIM A GOOD, HARD PUNCH.

DESPITE ALL REASON AND COMMON SENSE,
HE DIDN'T GIVE UP
HE KEPT GOING, KNOWING FULL WELL THE STATE OF HIS BODY.
...
I SEE...
I USED TO THINK THAT I WOULD BE FINE WITH OR WITHOUT HIM. THAT IT DIDN'T MATTER
BUT, WITH ME, IT USED BE THAT...
I WOULD FEEL DECEIVED, BUT I'D STILL REACH OUT. I WOULDN'T LET GO.

NOWADAYS,
I CAN LOOK BACK
AND BE
GLAD THAT I CAN THINK LIKE THAT.

peek

IT'S HERE.
HUH?

I MEAN, THE OPEN AIR BATH IS BIG ENOUGH.
WE COULD TAKE IT TOGETHER.
Um)
THE BATHS ARE SEPARATE?
IN OTHER WORDS,
... UH
TO THE BARE NAKED BODY OF THE GUY I LIKE?
AFTER DATING FOR A MONTH, YOU DON'T THINK I WOULD REACT
SO, ARE YOU TELLING ME THAT,

I'M GOING TO HEAD IN FIRST!
Have fun.
WHAT THE HECK
I WAS JUST JOKING WELL MAYBE NOT
BUT STILL
All done.
Hey, welcome back.
HOW WAS THE OPEN AIR BATH?
REALLY GOOD
IT JUST HAPPENED TO BE EMPTY
SO I TOOK MY TIME

GUESS I MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE, HUH
GOING IN SEPARATE BATHS.
blub. blub
...
rattle
OH
...
How refreshing.

Zzzz
clatter
9 PM.
STILL EARLY
PROBABLY DEAD TIRED
You left your keys.
LETTING HIS GUARD DOWN, JEEZ

I used to think that I would be fine with or without him. That it didn't matter.

Nowadays,
I can look back and be glad that I can think like that.
...
THANK GOODNESS
Now that
you have begun to think like that.
THAT'S GREAT.
CLICK

MORNING
MM
GOOD MORN-
Huh?!
!
WAS I ASLEEP?
YOU WERE PROBABLY DEAD TIRED FROM ALL THAT WALKING AROUND HUH
THE FUTON'S BEEN LAID OUT ALREADY.
SO IF YOU'RE GOING TO SLEEP, THEN...
...
...

WHAT TIME DO YOU NEED TO GET UP TOMORROW?
HUH?
I'VE GOTTA BE SOMEWHERE SOME TIME TOMORROW MORNING...
SO I'LL BE GETTING UP A BIT EARLIER.
cover
...
ASAHINA-SAN?
I DON'T GET IT
I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHY YOU'RE BEING SO CONSIDERATE.

EVEN I --
I HAVE
ULTERIOR MOTIVES TOO
SO...
NMM.

I HAD PLANNED
ON HOLDING BACK A LITTLE LONGER..
WHY
WOULD YOU DO THAT ..
BECAUSE,
EVERY TIME WE MEET, I JUST—I WANT YOU.
BUT I DON'T WANT YOU THINKING THAT'S THE ONLY REASON WHY I MEET WITH YOU.
HA...

...
OH YEAH?
WELL DON'T HOLD BACK ON MY ACCOUNT.
NGH
BUT..
IF THAT WAS WHAT YOU WANTED,
THEN WHY BOTHER WITH SOMEONE LIKE ME?
!
scrape

I DON'T THINK SO.
ngh
squeeze
...
Ha.
YOU'RE A BOTHER.
pant
I DON'T THINK
?
Ha.
NOT ONE BIT

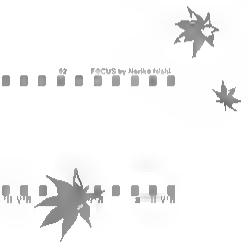
Ngh.
Ha.
AND IF I ASKED YOU TO BELIEVE ME,
Ngh.
YOU'D THINK I WAS LYING
Ah...
RIGHT NOW,
I JUST WANT YOU
TO KNOW THAT.

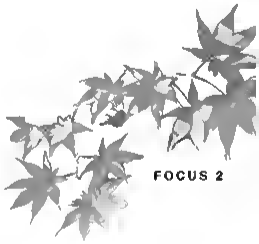
ASAHINA-SAN.
"Thank you".
I'm happy.

This man
Responds to
all that I convey.
squelch
squelch
There are so many things I want to give him.
And yet,
push
IF ONLY...
But every time, all I see are the things that I cannot.

If only I could be with him more and more,
Ha.
THEN...
Ha.
...NGH
Nowadays, I can look back and be glad that I can think like that.
I used to think that I would be fine with or without him
Ah...
...Ngh.
Broke out of that mentality, but to throw cold water on it now...
You finally

That's something I can't do.




FOCUS 2